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Interview with Anne Perrin Flynn

Anne Perrin Flynn
SC Mother of the Year Committee

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Winthrop University
South Carolina Mother of the Year Award Oral History Archives
Interview Transcript
Anne Emile Flynn
Member of the South Carolina Mother of the Year Committee
July 13, 2015

Dr. Disney: My Name is Dr. Jennifer Leigh Disney and I'm here interviewing Anne Flynn. We are so happy here, welcoming us in your home on July 13th, 2015. Thank you so much, Anne, for being with us today.

Anne Flynn: Well, it's a pleasure. Thank y'all for coming.

Dr. Disney: Why don't we start with when and where you were born and raised. Tell us a little bit about your family and early childhood experience.

Anne Flynn: I'm a Spartanburg girl. I was born and raised in Spartanburg. Born in Spartanburg Regional Center. I grew up my entire life in Spartanburg before I went off to college. My father was from Spartanburg, and my mother from Orangeburg and when they got married they built a duplex in Spartanburg and lived here. I have a sister, Sally, who is divorced and lives in Greenville, SC and I have a younger brother, Ed, who was married and lives Dallas, TX. We have a lot of family in Spartanburg, when I was growing up, My grandmother lived here, My father's father died while he was in law school so I never knew my grandfather, matter of fact, my grandfather died while my father was in Law School and my parents, my mother waited a year to get married because she wanted my grandmother to participate in all the activities. My dad was the baby of the family and there were 3 siblings, and he was 9 years younger than his sister, and 11 year younger than his brother so he was their play toy. He had two brothers, my aunt jebba and my uncle buck and my aunt jib a block away from me and so her daughter patty she had two boys and a daughter and we lived a block away and we were in and out of each others houses, so much that i had this wonderful extended family growing up. So instead of a brother and a sister, I had really 3 brothers and 2 sisters.

Dr. Disney: That's great. That's wonderful.

Anne Flynn: Well, also.... in Spartanburg, there's an old neighborhood called Converse Heights and that's where I grew up. I grew up a block away from the same school my dad went to grammar school. Pine Street School. I went to Pine Street, my aunt went to Pine Street, my sister, my brother went to Pine Street. We would walk to school and walk home, with all my cousins. So, it was really something - it was a neighborhood school and everyone knew each other and you knew the teachers and it was really quite special. My cousin, my first cousin was actually principle of that school at one time before he went on to be principle of the junior high school.

Dr. Disney: So sounds like you grew up with a real sense of community.

Anne Flynn: Oh I did. If you did anything wrong, your mother knew it before you walked back into the door, so you couldn't get away with anything. Another really interesting story is, one of the little girls that grew up on my street was into drama and productions and plays. My sisters and I got really good roles because my mothers could sew and make all the costumes, so any production we put on or play or circus, we had starring roles because Christy Smith knew my mother could sew and now she is a 5th grade teacher at Pine Street School and has put on productions that actually performed for the President of the United States and my children were in them. My mother actually, they did a take off on Sister Act, and my mother was the head nun and sang with all the children in the school, so it's been this - I think the thing that is so wonderful about living in Spartanburg is that its multi-generational. I knew my grandparents friends, I know my parents friends, I've made my own friends, some who I grew up in High School with, I've gotten to know my childrens' friends - so it's really special.

Dr. Disney: That's great. That's a wonderful place to live. Tell us a little about your education, and your young adult life. What were your dreams, goals and aspirations?

Anne Flynn: Well, the wonderful thing about living Spartanburg, SC, we lived in an area called District 7 and they had exceptional public schools. One of my friends fathers was a superintendent of education, my father served on the school board, and my husband served for 12 years and also chaired the school board. So, Public Education was very important in Spartanburg, and there is a very good private school, but competition is a good thing and I think it makes you better. I got a really good education in Spartanburg, and I felt like I had a lot of options. My dad and mother wanted me to go to a girls school because they had very close friends who actually my Godmother who went to Hollins, she had such a strong bond with her friends so they took me to see Hollins, Sweet Briar, Mary Baldwin, and I just fell in love with Mary Baldwin and ended up going there and met the 6 closest friends I ever had in my life, so they were right.

Dr. Disney: That's wonderful.

Anne Flynn: You asked about aspirations, When I was growing up, not many women had careers but my parents were very supportive of anything I wanted to do. My mother wanted me to be a Dental Hygienist, and I almost fainted every time I went to the doctors or the dental office, so I knew I wasn't going to be a Dental Hygienist. But, I loved children, I loved - it's funny, fabric, something about fabric and color, I've always loved. I thought maybe about going to school to get some kind of degree in color print or fabric. Its just, where I went to school, they didn't provide that. The all girls school I went to, it was a Liberal Arts School. I really looked at, I was excited about having a job, I traveled a year after I graduated from Mary Baldwin, I went to Europe. I studied my Junior year abroad and that kind of gave me the travel bug. I lived abroad for a year and worked for an Israeli family and spoke English with their child, and traveled with them for a year - and then my Dad said it was time to come home and have my own life, so I came back and moved to Charleston, and started working for a travel agency and one night I was seated next to a very attractive man who was an attorney in Charleston and after dinner, he offered me a job to come be his Real Estate Litigation Paralegal and I said, "well my dad's a lawyer, but I don't know anything about being a Paralegal." He said, "Well, I'll train you."

So he sent me to school, and I worked for Mr. Pritchard for several years before he died and lived in Charleston and that's actually where I met my husband.

So, it's not necessarily that I had a grand plan, I just had a lot of energy and was interested in lots of things and the world was really changing back in the 1970s. Doors were opening up for women. In 1971 or 70, they took women in UVA and my father had gone to UVA and that was one school that he told me I couldn't go to, that I wasn't gonna be the first girl, but I felt like I had lots of opportunities and I was interested in so many things that I wasn't sure where I was going to end up. But, I love being in Charleston and I worked for and met my husband at the record office, checking the title. I thought he was somebody else, and he said, "Well if you really wanted to meet me, all you had to do was say so" and I was so embarrassed but he was really pretty cute. So, I kind of went with it, and he called and he wanted to know my name and I told him my name, and he wanted my number and I told him, "No, I don't think I'm gonna give you number, I don't know you" and I left the records office to go back to my law firm the afternoon that I met him and as I was walking in the door, the receptionist said, "Telephone for you, Anne" and I said, "Who is it" and she said, "A Larry Flynn" and I said "Tell him I'm not here" and she said, "I'm not gonna tell him you're not here, I just told him you were walking in the door" and I went "Oh No, Okay." So I talked to him on the phone, and it was Halloween, and he asked me to go Trick-or-Treating and I said, "Well are you the Trick or the Treat?" and he said, "Well you'll have to go out with me and find out!" and the rest is sort of history.

Dr. Disney: What a great story, I love that. What activities did you get involved in, in terms of family, community, education, employment - both before and after you were married? You talked to us about some, was there anything else you'd like to add?

Anne Flynn: I was really, my parents were very strong Presbyterians and I did a lot at church, I was involved in Youth Group, I sang in the Choir, I wish I had a good voice, I never got to do a solo, but I did love to sing. I took piano lessons, and I did a little theater, I did scouting. My principal activity up until junior high, was, that I was a swimmer. I loved to swim. I swam on an aquatic team in Spartanburg and we used to practice every morning at Converse College in their pool, so I would get up at 5, swim before school and then go to school. I did that through my 11th grade year in High School. I thought about possibly swimming in college, but did not. Not quite as many opportunities for women as there are now. I was quite proficient in breaststroke and butterfly - those were my two strokes. We had a.... sort of like having two sets of friends, I had friends I went to school with and grew up with, and I had my swimming friends, that we traveled a lot with. It really orients your schedule and gives you some structure to follow as you grow up because every summer at the crack of dawn, in the pool for 2 hours, and then you come home.

Dr. Disney: Lots of discipline required.

Anne Flynn: Yes, Yes it was.

Anne Flynn: Oh, then you asked me "Other Activities"..... I also saw my parents volunteer in the community and give back a lot, so I worked at a mission when I was growing up. I also did a lot

of babysitting. I worked on my Girl Scout projects, and then I was involved in different things through School Activities. I worked on the Spartana Staff, and I sold ads for the newspaper, wrote a little bit, I never was the featured writer but enjoyed doing it, I could sell an ad. Then I also belonged to 2 service clubs when I was in High School. I would've liked to join the French club but I think my accent was not sufficient enough. I went to the meetings, but I that's probably one of the regrets, that I never learned to become fairly fluent in French. I would've loved that.

Dr. Disney: So tell us about the early years of your marriage, and the birth of your children.

Anne Flynn: Wonderful. Well, Larry kind of took me by surprise. I had been dating someone else, before I met him and decided that wasn't what I was interested in. As I said, I kind of met Larry by a fluke and my friends, the person I used to date hunted every weekend. So I was sitting there by myself, I was 25 years old, 26 years old and this guy was hunting with his family in the country and I was hanging out with friends in Charleston and my friends really really liked Larry and we sailed a lot in the harbor, I was living in Charleston at the time, so they said "Call that nice Larry Flynn." I said, "Okay," so I would call him and I would date the other guy during the week, and I would sail with Larry and it was really kind of funny. One day, I just kind of thought, "You know, I really like this guy and I think I'm just going to cut it off with the other guy," so I did. We got married, lived in Charleston, bought a house in the old village of Mt. Pleasant. Actually not far from where Anne Dupree, another committee member lives and Anne Edwards but did not know either one of them at that time and then we worked like a dog on that little house, and we bought a little house on Queen Street and right after that, my uncle died and my father's firm was looking for another attorney and came to my husband asking him if he'd be interested in becoming a partner in my father's firm, Perrin Perrin Mann and Patterson in Spartanburg. Well, I was really shocked because I didn't think I was going to live back in Spartanburg, and the offer, it was really wonderful and the chance to live in Spartanburg with my parents becomes sort of intriguing so we moved to Spartanburg. My husband says it's because the house was so old, it leaked, the floors creaked, and he wasn't sure he took it because of the job or because of where he was living at, repairing the whole house downtown. We made the move, and I don't think we've ever looked back.

Dr. Disney: Wonderful. Tell us about the birth of your children.

Anne Flynn: When we got married, Larry was 32 and I was 27, almost 28. So, we were married about a year and then I had Laurence when I was in Spartanburg and he was born in 1981 and then 2 1/2 years later, I had Tatum, and he's the little boy and he was born in 84, and a quick 18 months later, I had Anne Porché and she was born in 1985 and Anne Porché is named after my mother, and goes by the double name. Its pretty wonderful, I think the thing that I was maybe so totally unprepared for is - Larry is the oldest of 8 children, so he flat out handle babies and children, and he could have one on his hip and he could take two with him, he can be out in the yard. He was like magic, he's like the pied piper, everyone just loved being with their daddy, I was kind of business - I was the drill sergeant and he was the pied piper - kind of still is.

Dr. Disney: That kind of connects well with my next question. What does "Motherhood" mean to you?

Anne Flynn: I think my mother, Anne Porcher Perrin, and my grandmother Anne Louise Zeigler, were my two role models in life, and when I was little, I thought everyone had a mother like I had and they didn't. Everyone loved being at my house, because my mother was pretty special - I never came home, that I can remember when my mother was not there or not home shortly thereafter. I think for so many years, I just wanted to be like my mother. I'm not as cute as my mama, but I'm trying. She's so talented, one thing my mother is, extremely organized, she's extremely efficient. She was just, she and my dad were married for 64 years and just something very special. I wanted that in my own life and I learn from watching from my mother, than from what she said. So, I wanted to be my own mother but I wanted to have my children feel about me the way I felt about my mother and my father. I hope I've done that. My mother had breast cancer when I was a sophomore in college and I was getting ready to go off, at the end of my sophomore year to junior year abroad when they found it. I thought I would just stay home, I wasn't going to leave, because back then breast cancer really was a death sentence. Not many people I knew survived breast cancer, and my father said "Oh Anne Tatum, you are going on this trip because if you don't go, your mother is gonna think I'm not telling her something. You're going and we're gonna come see you, and that was sort of the way my parents did things. They - Things were hard, but they put one step in front of the other, and my mother told me one time, she said, "You know Anne...." they would call me Anne sometimes, I went by a double name my whole life so if they said Anne Tatum it was either a term of endearment or I had really messed up, it was the tone of the voice that kind of dictated that, but mama told me one time, "You don't always have control over what happens in your life, in the circumstances that impact you, but what you do have control over, is how you choose to handle it" and she was a walking example. I watched her do that repeatedly through her life and I will say, my parents, you knew they could disagree, it was always behind the door but they never put their children in the middle of it, they never used us as pawns and the word was absolute and you better not go ask my dad if mother told you "No." So, they were a team and I still think of them as a team. I lost my dad two months ago and so I always said, I thought the big nightmare would be, not the person that's gone, it's the person that is left, because imagining one without the other was almost something I couldn't do. My mother is strong, and she's done amazing and what was ahead for my dad was so terrible that I think my mom was able to let him go.

Dr. Disney: What special role model you have growing up.

Anne Flynn: She still is, she's extremely talented - my love of flowers, love of yard came from my mother and father, and my grandmother. My mother is so talented, she is known for her flower arrangements and when the first time I would have a party, I'd ask mother to come over and do my flowers and finally she said, "Look, you're never gonna learn unless you do" and she said, "I'll come and help you" well, I never could get it as good as my mother. I would do something and I'd sweat over it, and she'd make it look so easy - she puts it in and it's just magnificent. The first time I did an arrangement, it just wasn't right and I called her and said, "Mom, can you come over and help me" and she came over and took her clippers and she clipped this, and clipped that, and she stuck this here and stuck that there and she goes "Yeah, that's a lot better." and so she can still do that and she serves on the flower guild and the beatification guild with church, and she's 88 years old and her eyes are still better than anyone's. She doesn't haul the

buckets around, and cut like she used to. You put several buckets of flowers and get her an oasis, and... Watch out! It's something else.

Dr. Disney: I love that story. So tell us, how did you become a member of The South Carolina Mother of The Year Association?

Anne Flynn: Well, my mother was a member and she served for about 15 years during the 80s and she served with Anne Edwards and with Janet Kodder, I think Lib Lafitte was on that committee, and Callie Wenges and Callie Wenges was a sorority sister of my mother's and so was Lib Lafitte, and Lib Lafitte and Callie Wenges children married each other, so they were very related that way. After my mother resigned from the committee, she thought 15 years was enough, some have stayed on the committee 20 and 30 years but my mother felt 15 years was enough. She recommended, Gwen Howell, who you'll be interviewing later today and Gwens mother in law and my grandmother were sisters. My mothers first cousin, Gwen married. So we grew up very close with Gwen. When Gwen retired, she recommended me. So that's how I ended up on the committee.

Dr. Disney: How has your member on the committee impacted you, your family and your community?

Anne Flynn: Probably, I've met so many people throughout the state of all different ages. That's one of the gifts I mentioned, of being in Spartanburg. I've known people that were my grandparents' age, as well as my childrens' age. That wisdom and South Carolina is a very small place so you're either related or they live next door to somebody, you just can't get away from it. I think the women that served on this committee had strong faith, had strong belief in what they were doing. It really a mission for them and the women that have been selected through the year, are exceptional and the book that was done with the support of the committee and spearheaded by Shirley Fishburne and Martha Cranford. If you go back and read about these women, you feel so honored to be apart of this. I cannot tell you how many times I have run into people that I've had some connection with because I served on this committee and some hard decisions have been made and they have not always been easy. This committee was very social in many ways and maybe one of the most delightful committees, but one of the hardest because some hard changes had to be made shortly after I came on the committee and I went to chair a little quicker than I expected. That experience, I think, made me a much better leader. People may not always agree with what you do, but they respect why you did it and you're not gonna please everyone, so you might as well what you do what you think is right and stand by it and support it.

Dr. Disney: What years did you chair the committee?

Anne Flynn: I went on the committee in 2008 and I chaired it, I went to Vice Chair and then I chaired it during Annette Sutcliffe and Marianna Habisreutingers year and also, Miriam Gulledge because some of the years overlap. When you get to work with three exceptional mothers pretty closely, and I also worked with Betty McGregor because she was a national mother and I went to the national convention with Marianna in Salt Lake City. Betty McGregor was extremely helpful in how to prepare our mother to go to that national meeting. Their

friendship through the years, and these women are dedicated, they are committed and when they put their mind to do something, they were leaders in their community and churches and there was really nothing more important than their faith and their family. I think young people today are remarkable, they juggle a lot of things, sometimes I think life was simpler or more clear cut when I was growing up. It didn't seem so complicated or as many choices, but we all know that's not true. If you your parents can make you feel like your world is very safe and secure, they've done a pretty good job. I think it's encouraged me to really stop, and if i'm in Charleston to call Anne Edwards, to call Anne Dupree, go spend the night. These friendships were developed for you to use and enjoy and if i'm going through town where there's a mother, pick up the phone and call her. And I have done that, I always leave feeling like I got the gift.

Dr. Disney: What was it like, selecting the mothers of the year, working with these state mothers, going to the national convention meeting. Tell us a little bit more about what that process was like, and again the impact of the interactions with these amazing women.

Anne Flynn: Once again, when I got to working with the mothers I worked with, it was really a pleasure. A lot of times, some of the mothers were not computer saavy, so you would work with them, you really worked with them one on one for long periods of time, and I would input on the computer the information they needed, and in some ways that's really a gift because when you talk to someone on the computer or your text, you don't have the same connection that you have when you work with someone or sit across the table with them, or you laugh, or you find out stories, or it links to something else. What you may gain in efficiency, you lose in a basis that sometimes develops a friendship or a camaraderie that you wouldn't have if you hadn't done that. Going to the national convention, I didn't know what to expect. We had never had anyone from our committee in the past 20 years that I was on the committee go to the national convention. We've had national mothers that I have gone and come back. Our committee and our state organization is set up a little differently than the other organizations in other states and I think they kind of left us alone for many years because of the way we honored our mothers and we had exceptional mothers and Anne Edwards, when she was first lady of South Carolina made part of her mission that, that mother was honored and had a reception and a tea at the govenor's mansion and that just didn't happen in others states. So, when you have exceptional mothers and 4 national mothers and you have the tea at the governor's mansion, they leave you alone. We ended up sort of bringing the committee to an end, and that was one of the hard things I was talking to you about, because I think the original, the criteria and some of the things they were asking us to do as a small state, we could not do. So the state affiliated associated with the national organization not being able to follow through on what they were requiring for us was something that we felt was wrong to do. So, we took the funds that were earmarked to celebrate women in the state of South Carolina, and did the 70 years of women and also we're so excited to have the affiliation with the Archives at Winthrop and I think it was a win-win, I really do.

Dr. Disney: We sure do, I mean we're so excited to have this intergenerational conversation with women, and mothers of your caliber and the women you've worked with. We're just so honored that you're working with us on this project.

Anne Flynn: Well, I will say I have been very fortunate. I've had an amazing partner in my husband, and I feel like we are a team. I didn't want to marry someone exactly like my dad because we're both pretty strong willed but I wanted to marry someone with the same commitment to our marriage as my father and my husband's family had that. I mean, being the oldest of 8 children, it's - I really thought I only wanted two children and then I married Larry and it was a small village every time you went to visit. I thought, you know, maybe I might have 3. So, I didn't go for 4, I thought about it but I didn't go for 4. But it's been something just, I've been really really blessed. But I've had great support and Larry made a comment to me years ago, he said, "You know, Anne, I wake up every single morning and make the decision to stay married" and he said, "It's a decision you make every day." I thought about it, there is no one that make him madder than me, and I can push every button if I need to, just like he can push mine, but he said, "I just want you to know, I wake up every day and I make the decision to stay married."

Dr. Disney: What a beautiful commitment and partnership.

Anne Flynn: So, that's been part of the toast to my children, is that he said, "You wake up every morning, and you make a commitment to stay married."

Dr. Disney: And your mom and dad modeled that for you, and you two have modeled that for your 2 children. That's a beautiful lesson.

Anne Flynn: My husband's parents did the same thing.

Dr. Disney: So, I want to ask you a few broader questions about women and motherhood society. Let me start with this. What do you think are the most important issues facing women today?

Anne Flynn: I just think there are opportunities for women today are wonderful. I would say, I'm a "Southern Feminist" and I use that term because I think it's a softer rendition and I think you catch more flies with sugar than you do with vinegar. So, you never accomplish anything by being ugly to someone, but you can't be a pushover either. I think equal pay for the job, I think the same opportunity to do the job is absolutely should be structured by law, because that hasn't always been the case. I think women and men approach things differently and it doesn't mean that you have to - just because you don't do it the way a man does it doesn't mean you're wrong for the job or evil, it just means you do it differently. If you don't believe in yourself, nobody else is gonna believe in you. You learn more from the mistakes you make than sometimes your successes. My dad used to always tell me, "Don't ever be afraid of failing because when you fail, you learn what you don't want to do again. and you never forget it." So, you kind of need to celebrate failure, because it makes you work harder. I think that's really true. I've had lots of wonderful things happen in my life, but I can flat out tell you the things when I fell flat on my face.

Dr. Disney: Do think women's work, and women's role as mothers are adequately recognized by society today?

Anne Flynn: No, and I'm gonna go back to another thing you asked me, "What's the biggest issue facing women?" I think its balance, because I think when I was really young, I had, well I still have a pretty good energy level. I wanted to.... There were so many things that I was interested in, but I never found anything that I thought was more important than my children or my husband. I had jobs, I worked for my husband part time as a Real Estate Litigation Paralegal but I never, I didn't have a career like a Physician, I didn't have a career like a Lawyer where you are penalized if you don't work and I think women that are able to combine, even part time when their children are little and be more available when your children are little. Whether you add to it education-wise, or in volunteer experience, even taking a little bit less for the flexibility in your schedule, then there's always a time you can go back. That's a choice, and that's a choice that you have to make with your husband. One of the things that my husband was really concerned about was that he wanted our daughter to have a career where she could support herself and had flexibility and she has done that, and I'm really really proud of her. She does have a lot of flexibility in what she is doing, but I think she will not have as much time to volunteer. I had to pick the things I wanted to do, and I was involved with just about everything my children were doing. Some I enjoyed, some I didn't, but I don't regret being involved in what my children were doing and knowing their friends and being at the school and any activity they participated in. I don't regret that.

Dr. Disney: You predicted my next question beautifully, which is to talk about what issues you face when you were trying to balance your life as a mother, work with your kids, being able to raise your kids, and work in the community or employment or volunteering. How are you able to juggle or balance those choices, those activities. How did you guide yourself through those years.

Anne Flynn: I had really supportive husband and he was always home before the children went to bed and if he had to go back to the office, he came home, did bath time, gave me a little break. We had supper, and then he'd go back. If there was something really important to me, my exercise time was early morning and I would get up at 5, 5:30 and my husband did the lunches. So, I had time to do that. As I said, were a partnership, he really encouraged me to take large volunteer jobs and then he stood behind me and supported me when I did it, so he was my cheerleader too and I would think, "Do I want to do this?" and he'd say "I can't answer that question, but if you want to do it, I'll help you do that. I'll help that happen." I also had parents in town, they were not babysitters. My mother gave me a check right after my first child was born and she said, "Look, I feel really guilty but I'm not a babysitter and your dad and I go and do, if I want to come by and pick up the children, I wanna do it because I want to be there but I don't want to feel responsible for doing that." and she said, "I'm gonna give you this check and if you..." she gave it to me once a year, and she said if she ever finds out that I spent it on food, clothing, house, anything, I'll never give it to you again. Its for quality care, I don't want you to ever scrimp on having someone you're comfortable with to take good care with your children, and I don't want to feel bad because I'm not there" and they traveled a bunch, and so, she was as good as her word. She did that for about 15 years. i think she did that for my sister and brother whenever they asked. I just was grateful for it. She would come and she might take one or all

three and she might be gone for 5 minutes, or she would be gone for 5 hours. I just never knew, but you know that's an amazing gift because when she was here, she was in it and I knew she wanted to be there and I didn't feel like I was imposing on her. My children, matter of fact, when they'd come home from college would swing by my parents house and I'd be wondering, "Why aren't you here?" and so then I got in the habit of calling mother and daddy, "Okay, are the kids at your house? Dinners ready, will you tell them to come home?"

Dr. Disney: What a beautiful story. The bond, that they connected as grandparents and grandchildren because I think of the way your mom handled it.

Anne Flynn: Well, we always go to the beach one week every summer together with my cousins, my brother and his children, my sister and her children and we brought girlfriends, boyfriends. So all of my children's spouses went to the beach with us for several years before they married. Same thing with my sisters children. It was just family bonding and we have done that for 38, 39 years.

Dr. Disney: You talked about your husband wanting your daughter to grow up being able to be self-sufficient, to make her own way, and make her own choices. What do you think she faces? What do you think younger women face today in terms of balancing work and family and that kind of thing?

Anne Flynn: Anne Porcher has just gotten her Masters, she's a nurse practitioner and she worked as an ICU Trauma nurse at Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga. She had a real eyeful of how hard some women have to work and especially if you go back to school, they may be the sole supporter of their family. She was just determined to become a nurse practitioner, to get her out of the hospital where she could have a more normal life. She may go back into PRN, I just don't know but she has a marketable skill and she can pretty much do her own schedule and that really started with strong support from her dad and from me. When the boys were in school, Larry would give them a certain amount of an allowance. He was a little easier on them, every now and then a charge would go through and he wouldn't say anything. We really had to have a conversation, it's a lot. You're setting her up, you're telling her that the rules are different for her, than they are for the boys and you can't do this. It took a little bit, but he finally held her feet to the fire and she probably is the best money manager of all. So, she learned well - she can pinch a penny.

Dr. Disney: What do you think feminism mean or what does feminism mean to you?

Anne Flynn: I think there are really 3 components of feminism. I think you should have the same rights under the law as men when it comes to your job and rights as an individuals, but I also think feminism means being able to do something and still be a woman and not feel guilty because you're not a man. I think feminism, with the term, it almost became like if you didn't work, there was something wrong with you. I think women need to be better supporters of each other because there are times when there's no one who does anything quite like your mom. I have 2 grandchildren, and 1 on the way and I will you tell you when I first heard that my grandchildren were going to be in daycare, I was a little anxious about it, but my son, both of my

sons took me with them to the daycare centers and I think the places that both of my grandchildren are in right now, are fantastic. They're educated, simulated environments. The ratio of individuals is wonderful. I'm able to drop in and pick them up if I want to. I used to be able to drop in and give my oldest grandchild, Lucy, a bottle, put her down for her nap. If I had a meeting in Columbia and then go home, I didn't even have to go by my son, Laurence or Rachels. My two daughter in laws have been extremely supportive. My daughter in law Margo, who lives in Tennessee, took me with her to look at the daycare center, to make sure I thought it was something. Was she overlooking something. What had I seen, what had I observed when I visited Lucy's daycare center. Did I see the same thing, did anything jump out at me. So when your daughter in laws involve you and value how you feel, then you're pretty fortune.

Dr. Disney: That's great.

Anne Flynn: My daughter doesn't have any children yet, she's been married two years in May. I think she's thinking about it. I'm not asking.

Dr. Disney: What do your sons do for a living and what do your daughter in laws do for a living?

Anne Flynn: My son is an attorney, he's 6th generation attorney, hes a bond attorney in Columbia with a firm called Pope Flynn, and Laurence, the Flynn is named after my son and my husband is of council to that firm. My daughter in law works with John Hancock and she is an accounting representative and if you buy a retirement plan for your company, she goes and does education and looks at your benefits. She travels some, but she also works out of her house and she's very structured. She's very organized. Rachel is quite good at what she does, and she has the ability to sell but she basically monitors peoples accounts or businesses accounts and makes sure all the personell are happy with their benefits, or if they need changes and to make sure they have a clear understanding and she does educational seminars. My son, Tatum, my middle son lives in Nashville and he's a commercial leasing broker for downtown property and just became a partner in Cresa, which is a nationwide firm and he's wife, Margaret is a licensed family counselor. So, she has some flexibility in her hours and the day care center. She's in Mt. Juliet, which is about a 30 minute drive from Nashville and her little daycare center is even right across the street, so she can go and have lunch with baby. My son-in law Haines, he married my daughter Anne Porcher, owns a business in Monteagle, TN. Its an outfitters business, they sale outdoor wear, the university in the south, Sewanee is in this location. Kayaks, camping gear, hiking boots. He could sell ice to an Eskimo. So he's in the right business. They've opened up an online component and a shipping component and they've just bought a home on the domain of Sewanee. So, two of my children went to Sewanee, my middle son Tatum went to Sewanee, and my daughter Anne Porcher went to Sewanee and they met their spouses there. Its like a cult, once they get you I don't know. I would've never sent them to Tennessee if I knew they weren't coming back. My oldest son did not go there but he likes to go visit. So, matter of fact my middle son was married in All Saints Chapel on the grounds of Sewanee. Anne Porcher, went to Sewanee and decided she wanted to be a nurse after an accident she was in, in 2006. She was in the hospital for a year and she was the kind of child who would faint in the dermatologist office, so when she told me she wanted to be a nurse, I said, "You've got to be kidding me." She went

back to school, got the prerequisites, then she got her bachelors of science in nursing. Worked on ICU Trauma floor, was given a job there and worked with some of the same people that treated her, on the same floor. Same neuro group and then she decided she wanted to get her nurse practitioner license. She went and got her masters, she was in the last group that was grandfathered in that you become a nurse practitioner with a masters. I think possibly one day she might want to teach, and she'll go get her doctorate, but she's passionate about what she does and she loves it. So, I'm very proud of all 3 of my children. I'm very proud of their spouses, those are the children that you get the easy way because their mothers did such a good job.

Dr. Disney: Well you look like a very proud mother, talking about your kids. That's great.

Anne Flynn: I am. I am.

Dr. Disney: I asked you before what feminism meant to you but I didn't ask you, do you consider yourself a feminist.

Anne Flynn: Yes, I do. If I could go back and do something differently, I wouldn't - I really don't have any regrets with what I did but I think I would have been more protective of my time. I did a lot of volunteer things sometimes with my children that maybe I did because somebody else did it, or I thought I was supposed to. I think I would've been a little more selective. I've learned how to say "No" and I think I would've tried to filter maybe more in 1 or 2 areas and concentrate more that way. I had one child with a pretty significant learning disability, who overcame some amazing odds reading wise. He had an auditory processing problem. I learned a lot about being, getting back up and fighting and learning and my middle son never quit on me. He always wanted to do. I worked so closely with him, and I'm so proud of Tatum because nothing defeats him. So he's in the right business, if someone tells him no, he's got a really good reason why you gotta do it. When you're leasing a commercial property it's a very strong strength. Yes, I do think I am a feminist. I would not think less of a mother if she went to work. I think you have to do what challenges and excites you. The world is really open for women and you have lots of options that you may have not had, especially with daycare and child care. There's really good childcare options for women today. I think it's not necessarily how much time you spend with your children, it's what you do the time you have and if you have a really good partner. The people I feel really heartbroken for, are those that are the sole support of their family and there is no back up and they have to go to work and they have to make compromises because without them earning a living, the family doesn't eat, or the children don't go to school. I had a great option with my husband.

Dr. Disney: I agree with you 100%, it seems like feminism used to be about kind of pushing women into the work world. There are different eras, you could be judged if you didn't work, or judged if you do work and so I love how beautifully you just said what we need to do as women is support other women making choices that are the best choices for them and maybe working in the home, maybe working outside the home and maybe raising children in the home. Some combination of both. And the education facilities for kids today are, there are so many opportunities that your kids, your grandchildren can be educated and stimulated, while they are being cared for. That's all so important, and making decisions.

Anne Flynn: The other thing too, I've also thought.... and this is a little bit different when you have equal pay for women but sometimes you can take a job that doesn't pay you as much if you have the flexibility, and it's a win-win. You've kept your hand in, you're still current and there are times you never get back a certain window with your children. You never get it back, once it's gone, so you shouldn't beat yourself up because you make a conscience choice. There are consequences to every decision you make, and as long as you know what they consequences are, you're usually pretty good with it. And you shouldn't feel guilty because you can't this. There are a lot of people who will support you if you just ask. A grandmother loves being called for 3 days or to pick me up or I've got a big project, can you come and help out?

Dr. Disney: I just want to thank you for sharing your words of wisdom with us and with the future generations of women that will hear this interview, and watch this interview.